



PORT TOWNSEND

School District

LEARNING THROUGH A SENSE OF PLACE

Superintendent
Dr. John A. Polm, Jr.

Board of Directors
Jennifer James-Wilson, Chair
Nathanael O'Hara
Doug Ross
Jeff Taylor
Connie Welch

Safe Routes to Schools, Port Townsend School District

June 4, 2020 Board Report

Prepared by Principals and Transportation Director

Salish Coast Elementary

- Approximate number of students riding the bus in the morning: 110 students
- Approximate number of students riding the bus in the afternoon: 165 students
- Approximate number of students walking daily: 50-75 (weather dependent)
- Approximate number of students biking daily: 10-25 (weather dependent)
- Number of crosswalks and crossing guards
 - Discovery and Grant Street
 - Discovery and Sherman Street
 - Grant Street crosswalk near staff parking lots
- Any concerns or recommendations: Numbers above indicate that many of our parents are still using a single student occupancy vehicle to and from school, particularly in the morning. Parents indicate three main reasons for not using the school bus:
 - Concern for elementary students riding with older students.
 - The length of the bus ride for students (up to 1 hour 35 minutes)
 - The early time in the morning, as early as 6:50 AM, which can be very dark in the winter.

Blue Heron Middle School

- Number of AM bus riders to Blue Heron: 84
- Number of PM bus riders from Blue Heron: 91
- Bike riders: 15 - 20
- Walkers: 10 - 15
- Number of crosswalks and crossing guards: 0 crossing guards; main crossing is at San Juan and Center. There are also crossings at San Juan and Discovery/F Street
- Any concerns or recommendations
 - Some concern with drop-off/pick-up directions not clear; we used a sandwich board for clarity early in the year, so permanent signs indicating which direction to go for those parents would be helpful
- Bike Education Program at Blue Heron
For 10 days during PE classes, 280 students participated in the Safe Routes to School bike education program. 10 volunteers led by Kees Kolff from the Jefferson County ReCyclery assisted last fall teaching students bike safety, bike maintenance, and to encourage kids to ride bikes for their health and wellness. Many students learned to ride a bike for the first time.



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We were awarded a \$30,000 grant this year for 30 new bikes, a trailer, biking equipment, and more teacher training so we can continue and improve the bike safety program at Blue Heron. The new bikes will be ready for next fall.

Port Townsend High School

- Number of AM bus riders to PTHS: 98
- Number of PM bus riders from PTHS: 70
- Bike Riders: 10 - 12
- Walkers: 10 - 15
- Crosswalks: There is one crosswalk on the high school campus, connecting the main building parking lot to the Gael Stuart building.
- Concerns:
 - We continue to have challenges with student drivers and community not being mindful of our crosswalk. Two years ago the district added a flag system that is used by our life skills students (and their paras) when crossing. This has been an area of high concern for student (and staff) safety, but especially because we have life skills students with varying degrees of cognitive delays using that crosswalk multiple times per day. While the crosswalk has been freshly painted this last year, it has been a challenge to get the City to repair and paint it on a regular basis, to ensure that it can be seen by drivers as a functioning crosswalk.
 - In the fall/spring during football/baseball season when the field house is used, we have a greater number of students parking behind the Lincoln Building. Student drivers are not always mindful of the adults who walk through the staff parking lot beside Lincoln when leaving school and going to their cars. Students cutting corners in and out of the parking lot has also been an issue, and there are multiple 'near misses' each year between student drivers and adults entering or leaving the school Main building or staff parking lot.

We regularly put student driver announcements in our bulletin and on our TV monitors about being a safe driver and being aware of others on and around campus. Our SRO often patrols problem areas before and after school, as his availability allows.

Transportation

The bus drivers review the bus rules with our students at the beginning of each school year, and offer reminders or a rules refresh, as a result of bus behavior concerns. The rules are stated both verbally and through the use of picture cards for the benefit of younger students, and for those with unique communication needs. The transportation department provides each school with the bus rules and consequences, which are consistent for all three schools and are published in the student handbooks. At the elementary grades, students are also given bus behavior reminders by their teachers in the first few weeks of the school year.



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Riding a school bus to school is a privilege and positive behaviors are expected on the bus and at the bus stop. Bus drivers are like teachers. Students must listen and comply with all rules. If a bus driver determines that a student is creating an unsafe situation on a school bus, the student may lose the opportunity to ride the bus to school indefinitely.

Students are expected to:

- Make space and welcome others to sit with them.
- Speak in a conversational voice.
- Get to their bus stop on time.
- Stay on the sidewalk while waiting for the bus.
- Sit where they will be successful and stay in their seats for the entire bus ride.
- Help keep the bus clean.

Bus Passes - If a student plans to ride a different bus home or get off at a different stop, they must bring a note from their parent/guardian to the office and get a bus pass to give the driver. Without a bus pass, students may ride only their regular route.

Bus Misbehavior Consequences:

- Students and parents/guardians are responsible for any damage caused to a school bus by students. In addition to school consequences, the following consequences are imposed by Port Townsend School District Transportation:
- Step 1: The bus driver gives a verbal warning to the student and/or imposes a change of seat, etc. The bus driver may choose to call the parent to discuss the incident/concern.
- Step 2: The bus driver completes an incident report and turns it into the school administrator, who meets with the student and calls parent/guardian. Disciplinary action is dependent on the nature of the infraction.
- Step 3: Progressive discipline applies, which may include suspension or restriction from riding the bus.
- Step 4: Continued misbehavior on the bus will result in loss of bus riding privileges. Loss of riding privileges could have an impact on a student's ability to participate in field trips, and athletic/activity events.